



# AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES CORNER

ISSUE II      MARCH 2015

## Ambassador's Message:



### Welcome to the Pristina American Citizen Services Corner Newsletter!

U.S. Embassy Pristina provides all types of American Citizen Services. U.S. citizens can renew a passport, obtain notary services, or report the birth of a child abroad directly in the Pristina Consular Section. Check out the public website for instructions and the appointment link.

Are you a long-term resident in Kosovo? The Consular Warden System is a network of U.S. citizens living long-term in Kosovo that help the U.S. Embassy disseminate information about important current events, health news, and security updates to the broader U.S. citizen community in Kosovo. If you would like to volunteer as a warden, contact [ConsularPristina@state.gov](mailto:ConsularPristina@state.gov) for more information.

The U.S. State Department provides an opportunity for you to receive important messages and travel warnings via email and cell phone when you enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Plan ([STEP](#)). I encourage U.S. citizens who have not done so already to register for STEP. This program plays an important role in keeping U.S. citizens traveling abroad safe and informed.

In this edition of the newsletter you will find information regarding information for filing U.S. federal and state income taxes and a special student section. You may also wish to review the [Traveler's Checklist](#) while preparing for future trips.

Happy Spring from my colleagues and me at the U.S. Embassy Pristina!

Sincerely,

Ambassador Tracey Ann Jacobson

To contact the  
ACS section  
during business hours

Email:  
[ConsularPristina@state.gov](mailto:ConsularPristina@state.gov)

Call:  
0 38-5959-3119

For after-hours  
Emergencies call  
0 38-5959-3000

## **Routine ACS Services**

American Citizen Services are available by appointment only. Arrive a few minutes before your appointment to allow time to go through security.

ACS appointments must be made using our website:

[http://pristina.usembassy.gov/acs\\_appointment\\_form.html](http://pristina.usembassy.gov/acs_appointment_form.html)

Please read and follow the instructions for the service you need:

- [Passport instructions](#)
- [Extra pages instructions](#)
- [Consular Report of Birth Abroad](#) for child born in Kosovo to U.S. citizen parent (at the time of birth).
- [Notarial Instructions](#) for documents to be used in the United States.

All applicants must bring their confirmation page at the time of appointment and follow all security screening rules. Please see additional information on our website about prohibited items.

The Library of Congress presents



Discover the stories of America's past, like Buffalo Bill and Harriet Tubman; find out about interesting inventions and get fascinating historical facts.  
From <http://www.americaslibrary.gov/>



The Federal government's official job list. Shown are employment search, information center, veteran information and forms.  
From [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)



The official benefits website of the U.S. government. Informs citizens of benefits they may be eligible for. Provides information on how to apply for assistance.

From [www.benefits.gov](http://www.benefits.gov)





## **U.S. Embassy Information for U.S. Citizens in Kosovo**

Routine and emergency information from the Embassy is sent to U.S. citizens who register their trips abroad in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

### **What is STEP?**

The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

### **Benefits of Enrolling in STEP:**

- Receive important information from the Embassy about safety conditions in your destination country, helping you make informed decisions about your travel plans.
- Help the U.S. Embassy contact you in an emergency, whether natural disaster, civil unrest, or family emergency.
- Help family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency.
- Create an account and simply add future trips with minimal time or effort.

### **Stay Informed, Stay Connected, Stay Safe!**

U.S. citizens can register at <https://step.state.gov/step/>. If unable to enroll in STEP online, you may also send us the completed form [DS-4024](#) via email to [consularpristina@state.gov](mailto:consularpristina@state.gov).

By monitoring the State Department's website, you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, Worldwide Cautions, and Country Specific Information for Kosovo. You also can read the "[Traveler's Checklist](#)" on the State Department's website. You also should ask us by [email](#) how YOU can help us stay in contact with fellow U.S. citizens in emergencies by becoming a U.S. Embassy Volunteer Warden.

### **Your Privacy is Paramount:**

All the personal information you provide to us is protected under the Privacy Act of 1974. This law prohibits us from sharing the information with anyone without your written authorization. Certain exceptions exist, such as when we need to share information on a limited basis in order to protect your safety and welfare in extreme circumstances.

### **U.S. Embassy Pristina Contact:**

Contact the Consular Section at [consularpristina@state.gov](mailto:consularpristina@state.gov) for the fastest response to your American Citizen Service inquiries.

The U.S. Embassy in Pristina, Kosovo is located at 30 Nazim Hikmet St. Arberia/Dragodan, 10000 Pristina and is open between 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., (381) 38-5959-3000.

## Summer Traveling Checklist

Spring and summer break is just around the corner and many families will be taking advantage to explore new places in the region and around the world. You don't want bumps in the road to spoil your plans. Make sure your travel documents are in order and that you are well informed. If the answer to the following questions are "yes", then you are off to a good start. If not, then it might be time to make an [appointment](#) with us.

### **Do you have a valid passport?**

Make sure you have a signed, valid passport, and a visa, if required, and fill in (in pencil) the emergency information page of your passport. It's a good idea to keep a copy of your passport data page with you while traveling.

### **Does your passport have a minimum of 6 months validity?**

Check your passport expiration date. To enter, many countries require travelers to have at least 6 months validity on their passports beyond their planned duration of stay. If your passport expires in six months or less you need to renew it now. Don't wait until the last minute; the Minimum processing time for passport applications is 10 workdays. For complete information on how to renew a passport please visit of our [website](#).

### **Does your passport have sufficient visa pages?**

Check your passport to make sure you are not about to run out of pages for visas and entry/exit stamps. If your passport has at least one year validity and is in good condition, but you are running out of visa pages, then you can apply for extra visa pages to be added. Keep in mind that the Embassy may only add the extra pages 2 times and only in the old style passports without a chip. For more information visit our [website](#).



### **Are you are well informed about the local conditions and laws of the places you will be visiting?**

Remember that while in a foreign country you are subject to its laws. [Look up Country Specific Information](#) about the places you plan to visit, as well as [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#). In addition, make sure to check with the embassies of your destination countries for information on prohibited items.

### **Have you enrolled in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)?**

Sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. It's easy and it's free! Doing so will help your family and friends get in touch with you in case of an emergency and the U.S. Embassy or Consulate con-tact you in case of a crisis in the places you visit.

### **Are your friends or relatives aware of your travel plans?**

Leave copies of your itinerary, passport data page and visas with family or friends, so you can be contacted in case of an emergency. In addition, check out the Department of State's webpage on [Tips for Travelling Abroad](#).



# Parents' Corner

Applying and renewing your children's passports is simple but there are some things you need to be aware of before you begin the process.

## What you need to apply

A completed [DS-11 form](#)

One 2"x2" passport photo

Evidence of child's U.S. citizenship

Evidence of relationship between child and parent(s)/guardian(s)

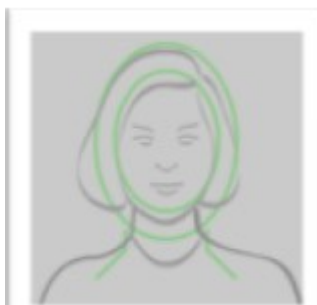
Parent(s) or guardian(s) identification and photocopy of identification

Provide parental consent

Pay applicable fee

Follow instructions for completing forms and supporting evidence on our [website](#)

Schedule an appointment [online](#)



- 1) You will need one 2"x2" photo of your child
- 2) Parents cannot appear in the photo with their child\*
- 3) Visit the [photograph requirements page](#)

**\*Tips for taking pictures of your baby—Lay your baby on his or her back on a plain white or off-white sheet. This will ensure your baby's head is supported and provide a plain background for the photo. Make certain there are no shadows on your baby's face, especially if you take a picture from above with the baby lying down. You can also cover a car seat with a plain white or off-white sheet and take a picture of your child in the car seat. This will also ensure your baby's head is supported.**

## Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program

The [Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program](#) (CPIAP) is one of the Department's most important tools for preventing international parental child abduction. The program allows parents to register their U.S. citizen children under the age of 18 in the Department's Passport Lookout System. If a passport application is submitted for a child who is registered in CPIAP, the Department contacts and alerts the parent or parents.

[Download and print a free children's activity book](#)

## **Information for Travelers**

### **STUDENT EDITION**

Ready for Spring Break? Don't let your escape from dorm life and research papers turn into a Spring Break horror story. Put your mind (and your parents) at ease by using these strategies to avoid dangerous situations.

[Spring Break 2015: Encouraging Spring Break Safety](#)

[Here](#) are some free, printable travel tools for your travel. Checklists, wallet cards, and more!

The [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) allows U.S. citizens traveling or residing abroad to get routine and emergency information from the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Enrollment can also help the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest you to help you in an emergency. Be sure to update your STEP profile to reflect your in-country contact number if you have one. Check out our [Country Specific Information](#), available for every country in the world, for information on a variety of matters about the country you will be visiting. The Special Circumstances section for each country will contain any relevant information about attitudes, local laws, and customs.

[Here](#) you can find tips to stay healthy, travel with prescriptions medicines, medical insurance, and other health related topics.

More resources of interest:

[Careers](#)

[Fulbright](#)

[Cultural Exchanges](#)

[Young Students](#)

[USA.Gov](#)

[Critical Language Scholarship](#)

[Gilman Scholarship Program](#)



## Can the U.S. Embassy help me with my U.S. taxes?

No. Regrettably, we cannot help you with your taxes. **There is no IRS office or IRS representative at the U.S. Embassy in Pristina.** Our consular staff does not have the ability to provide answers to specific questions about income taxes.

For immediate assistance from a taxpayer specialist, you can call, fax or email the **International Customer Service Site** located in Philadelphia. The Service Site is open Monday through Friday, for 17 hours each day, from 6:00 AM to 11 PM, Eastern Time. Their contact information is as follows:

Telephone: (267) 941-1000  
Fax: (267) 941-1055

U.S. citizens and residents must report their worldwide income on their federal income tax returns. Living or earning income outside the United States does not relieve a U.S. citizen of the responsibility for filing tax returns.

U.S. State Tax Information and Forms  
[Alabama](#) | [Alaska](#) | [Arizona](#) | [Arkansas](#) | [California](#) | [Colorado](#) | [Connecticut](#) | [Delaware](#) | [District of Columbia](#) | [Florida](#) | [Georgia](#) | [Hawaii](#) | [Idaho](#) | [Illinois](#) | [Indiana](#) | [Iowa](#) | [Kansas](#) | [Kentucky](#) | [Louisiana](#) | [Maine](#) | [Maryland](#) | [Massachusetts](#) | [Michigan](#) | [Minnesota](#) | [Mississippi](#) | [Missouri](#) | [Montana](#) | [Nebraska](#) | [Nevada](#) | [New Hampshire](#) | [New Jersey](#) | [New Mexico](#) | [New York](#) | [North Carolina](#) | [North Dakota](#) | [Ohio](#) | [Oklahoma](#) | [Oregon](#) | [Pennsylvania](#) | [Puerto Rico](#) | [Rhode Island](#) | [South Carolina](#) | [South Dakota](#) | [Tennessee](#) | [Texas](#) | [Utah](#) | [Vermont](#) | [Virginia](#) | [Washington](#) | [West Virginia](#) | [Wisconsin](#) | [Wyoming](#)

The IRS has made it easier than ever to get a record of your past tax returns, otherwise known as tax transcripts. Tax transcripts can be used for a number of things, such as to validate income and tax filing status for mortgage applications, to apply for student and small business loans, and to prepare to file current tax returns.

You can download and print your transcripts instantly, or request the transcript be mailed to your address on record. For further information and to request transcripts visit [Get Transcript](#).

## Important IRS and Tax Information Resources:

[Tax Fraud & Abuse](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Reporting Phishing](#)

[Identity Theft](#)

[No FEAR Act](#)

[Accessibility](#)



## LOCAL UNITED STATES CITIZEN SKILLS/RESOURCES SURVEY

U.S. citizens abroad may possess critical skills and resources invaluable for helping other U.S. citizens in a time of crisis. The Consular Section in Pristina would appreciate your assistance in identifying these skills and resources.

If you are interested in contributing information to the Consular “Skills Bank” please complete this survey and email a copy to

[consularpristina@state.gov](mailto:consularpristina@state.gov).

We will keep your responses confidential.

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/128210.pdf>



## Leaving Kosovo?

If you are departing Kosovo and have been enrolled in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program ([STEP](#)), please do not forget to end your enrollment when you leave.

If you previously enrolled online, you can end your enrollment by visiting <https://step.state.gov/step/>.



If you previously submitted a paper registration form at the U.S. Embassy Consular section in Pristina, you may unsubscribe yourself by sending an email request to close your enrollment with the Embassy at:

[consularpristina@state.gov](mailto:consularpristina@state.gov)



## American Corners in Kosovo



American Corners in Kosovo are jointly sponsored partnerships between the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy Pristina and local libraries. American Corners promote mutual understanding between the people of Kosovo and the people of the United States. Our three American Corners are located in Pristina, Prizren and Mitrovica (north).

### **What they offer:**

- Diverse programs and events from English language learning, exhibitions, discussions to business, skill building and fund programs
- A monthly calendar of events. Check out their facebook pages to get the most updated calendar
- A wide range of book collection for adults and children
- U.S. related films on DVDs from different genres
- U.S. Magazines, including the Economist, Rolling Stones, Entertainment, National Geographic, ...and the list goes on!
- Kindles with several titles on it in various subject areas, such as American Literature for kids and adults, autobiographies, U.S. History, media, etc. And the possibility to request new e-book titles!
- Public access computers
- Reference and educational resources
- A wide range of e-resources available through eLibraryUSA portal, including databases such as:
  - eLibrary with over 20,000 ebooks in English and 35,000 books in Spanish and Portuguese
  - Academic OneFile with over 42 million journal articles
  - BookFlix for early and reluctant readers of English Language, with a collection of 95 fictional video storybooks
  - Business Source Premier with over 2,300 journal titles
  - CQ Researcher Online covering current and controversial issues in the United States
  - Filmakers Library Online containing over 1,000 full documentaries
  - Literature Resource Center, which provides full text academic articles and book reviews, and more
- For a full list of databases see <http://elibraryusa.state.gov/resources.html> . You can access these databases from home at no charge once you become registered members at one of the American Corners.
- They provide space to discuss and meet, and
- A place where you can volunteer

### **Location and Contact Information:**

- American Corner Pristina.** This Corner is located in the ground floor of the National Library of Kosovo. Contact at: Tel +381 38 212 206; email: [acpristina@yahoo.com](mailto:acpristina@yahoo.com); facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acpristina>
- American Corner Prizren.** This Corner is located in the top floor of the Inter-Municipal Library in Prizren, close to the Turkish Hammam in Prizren. Contact at: Tel: +381 29 631 636; email: [americancornerprizren@yahoo.com](mailto:americancornerprizren@yahoo.com); facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acprizren>
- American Corner Mitrovica.** This Corner is located in the first floor of Vuk Karadzic public library in the northern part of Mitrovica. Tel: +381 38 28 423 872; email: [acmitrovica@yahoo.com](mailto:acmitrovica@yahoo.com); facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acmitrovica>.

## **U.S. Visa Updates—Limited Nonimmigrant Visa Services in Pristina**

Effective April 1, 2015, Kosovo residents with a valid transit, crew, media, or treaty investor/trader purpose of travel are eligible to interview at the U.S. Embassy Pristina, in addition to those with a valid USCIS nonimmigrant visa petition.

To schedule an appointment for a C, D, E, H, I, L, O, P, Q, or R visa interview click [here](#).

Any requests for other types of visa appointments, including student (F/M), Summer Work Travel (J), regular business or tourism (B1/B2) visa interviews, will not be answered and must be directed to [U.S. Embassy Skopje](#). Immigrant and Diversity Visa cases are also handled by U.S. Embassy Skopje.

### ***Nonimmigrant Visas Currently Processed in Pristina:***

C and D visas: Crewmember (D) visas are nonimmigrant visas for persons working on board sea vessels or international airlines in the United States, providing services required for normal operation and intending to depart the United States on the same vessel or any other vessel within 29 days. If you travel to the United States to join the vessel you will work on, in addition to a crewmember (D) visa, you also need a transit (C-1) visa or a combination C-1/D visa. More information is available [here](#).

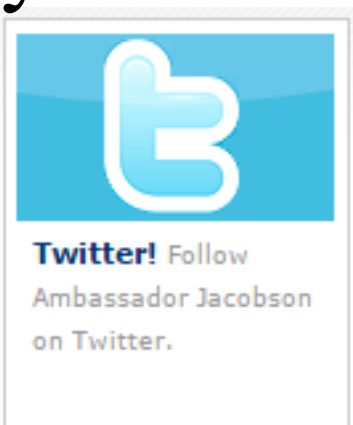
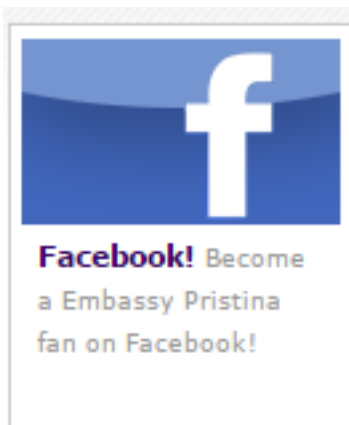
I visas: Media (I) visas are for representatives of the foreign media, including members of the press, radio, film, and print industries, traveling temporarily to the United States to work in their profession engaged in informational or educational media activities, essential to the foreign media function. Activities in the United States while on a media (I) visa must be for a media organization having its home office in a foreign country. Activities in the United States must be informational in nature and generally associated with the news gathering process and reporting on current events. More information is available [here](#).

E Treaty Investor visas: Treaty Trader (E-1) and Treaty Investor (E-2) visas are for citizens of countries with which the United States maintains treaties of commerce and navigation. You must be coming to the United States to: 1) engage in substantial trade, including trade in services or technology, in qualifying activities, principally between the United States and the treaty country; or 2) develop and direct the operations of an enterprise in which you have invested a substantial amount of capital. More information is available [here](#).

H, L, O, P, Q, R— Temporary work with a USCIS petition: Temporary worker visas are for persons who want to enter the United States for employment lasting a fixed period of time, and are not considered permanent or indefinite. Each of these visas requires the prospective employer to first file a petition with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). An approved petition is required to apply for a work visa. For more information about the petition process, eligibility requirements by visa category, and numerical limits, if applicable, see [Temporary Employment Visas](#), [Working in the U.S.](#) and [Temporary \(Nonimmigrant\) Workers](#) on the USCIS website. Once the petition is approved, USCIS will send your prospective employer a Notice of Action, Form I-797.

U.S. Government Sponsored Exchange J-1: Exchange visitor (J-1) visas are nonimmigrant visas for individuals approved to participate in exchange visitor programs with a DS-2019 program code starting with G-1, G-2, G-3, or G-7. Visit the [Exchange Visitor Program's website](#) to learn more about program eligibility requirements, regulations and much more. At the conclusion of their program, Exchange Visitor program participants are required to return to the home countries for at least two years to utilize the experience and skills they have acquired while in the United States.

# Stay Connected!



Click [here](#) to view U.S. Department of State videos and [here](#) to view U.S. Embassy Pristina videos



## Important Security Announcement

Electronic devices, large bags, weapons, and glass bottles are not allowed within the Embassy grounds. Visitors who do not follow these instructions will experience considerable delays at the security check point, which may result in the appointment being cancelled. There are no storage facilities on the facility.

## Follow Us on Social Media



<http://twitter.com/TravelGov>

<https://www.facebook.com/travelgov>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/statephotos>

<http://blogs.state.gov/>

[http://www.travel.state.gov/news/news\\_3162.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/news/news_3162.html)

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/dos/165020.htm>

<https://step.state.gov/step/>